

all families in 1775 identified Blocks including Integrated Tribal Development Project Blocks.

(b) Under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) each BPL family is entitled to 20 kg. of foodgrains per month at 50% of the economic cost w.e.f. 1.4.2000.

(c) and (d) The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) introduced in June, 1997 covers "poor in all areas" and the quantum of foodgrains provided for BPL families is uniform in all areas including the tribal areas. Allocation of foodgrains to State/UTs for BPL families under TPDS has been increased based on the population projection of the Registrar General as on 1.3.2000 instead of earlier population projection of 1995.

(e) and (f) The prices of foodgrains i.e. wheat and rice have not been increased recently. The CIP of wheat and rice for BPL families were last revised downward w.e.f. 25.7.2000 which are as follows:—

Wheat	Rs. 415 per quintal
Rice	Rs. 565 per quintal

Closure of Sugar Mills In U.P.

† 3642. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) Government's reaction towards the news-item published in the 'Dainik Jagran' on the 20th January, 2001 under the caption "Kendriya madad na milney per Uttar Pradesh ke saat cheenee railon kay band honay kay aasaar";

(b) whether Government have taken any decision in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

[19 April, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) to (d) The Government has been taking various steps from time to time to improve the health of the sugar industry. In this regard, the following steps have been taken:—

1. The levy obligation of sugar mills which was reduced from 40% to 20% w.e.f. 1-1-2000, was further reduced to 15% w.e.f. 1-2-2001
2. To restrict inflow of imported sugar in the country, custom duty has been increased to 60% w.e.f. 9.2.2000. The imported sugar has been brought under the release mechanism.
3. Advanced releases of freesale sugar are being given to needy sugar mills to enable them to clear cane price dues of the farmers.
4. Monthly releases of freesale sugar are being made judiciously to ensure fair realization to sugar industry.
5. Export of 10 lakh tonnes of sugar has been permitted in the licensing year 2000-2001 (April-March).
6. The Government is considering to amending the Sugar Development Fund Rules, 1983 to help sugar mills to take up bagasse based cogeneration of power and for providing financial assistance at concessional rates of interest to potentially viable sick sugar mills.

Foodgrain Policy

3643. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any foodgrain policy is being formulated keeping in view of removing import barrier for agro products;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any fresh incentives would be given to the farmers under this policy; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?